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The Niger Basin and Bungo park

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north-west of Spitsbergen and Prince Charles Foreland. In 1899 the foundation stone of the great Oceanographical Museum of Monaco was laid, under the patronage of the German Emperor; and last year, as we have also recorded, the Prince of Monaco founded an institute in Paris, with an international committee, associated with his collections in Monaco. This institute he endowed to the extent of £160,000. Almost every European country has some prominent scientists who have been definitely associated with the oceanographical and meteorological work of the Prince of Monaco. In this country there are associated with him the names of Mr. J. Y. Buchanan, whose scientific researches on board the *Princesse Alice* and at the Monaco Museum have been of much importance; Mr. W. S. Bruce, of the *Scotia*, who accompanied him on all his Arctic voyages; and Mr. W. Smith, junr., Aberdeen, who sailed with him in 1899 as artist.

The Prince is further associated with oceanographical research in this country, in that during his recent visit he presided at the inauguration of the Scottish Oceanographical Laboratory, and was there met by a representative gathering of Scottish men of science and others. At the close of the meeting the Prince was asked by Mr. W. S. Bruce, the Director of the Laboratory, to accept a replica of the medal which had been presented to the members of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition, as an acknowledgment of the valuable services which he had rendered to the expedition by the loan of instruments and in other ways, and also as a memento of his association with the new Institution. The Prince is thus not only himself a scientific investigator, but has also been associated in more than one country with the promotion of scientific research by others.

THE NIGER BASIN AND MUNGO PARK.[1]

(With Map.)

By Sir HARRY H. JOHNSTON, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.

IN 1603 the Scottish people discovered England as a field for adventure and enterprise. In the middle of the seventeenth century, and from thence to the beginning of the eighteenth, they carried out an equally remarkable work of exploration and settlement in Ireland. But it was after the union of the legislatures of England and Scotland that the Scottish people really embarked on their great career as pioneers of discovery and commercial adventure. Entering then for the first time fully into the privilege of subjects of the British Crown under a dynasty still Scottish in direct origin, the Scots rapidly made themselves famous in the history of the world's development by their enterprise in Central

[1] An Address delivered at Selkirk on December 10, 1906, in connection with the unveiling of the centenary memorial panels in the Mungo Park statue.

America, the West Indies, India and Africa. James Bruce, born at Kinnaird House, Stirlingshire, in 1730, was sent to Harrow to be educated, and from there was despatched by his father to work in the wine business between Spain, northern Portugal, and Great Britain. But Bruce's ambitions led him far beyond the Spanish peninsula into North Africa, where he was appointed Consul-General, and later on to Egypt, from which country he made his celebrated exploration of the Blue Nile and Abyssinia. He did not discover, as he had thought, the ultimate source of the Nile: that good fortune was to fall jointly to the lot of an Englishman, Speke, and a Scotsman, Grant. Were it not very certain that the source of the Blue Nile had really been discovered by Portuguese missionaries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and that therefore Bruce, unknown to himself, had been forestalled, Scotland would have had a two-thirds share in the glory of discovering the origin of the two upper head-streams of the Nile. Another great Scot, David Livingstone, revealed to us the principal sources of the Zambezi and the Congo. In 1777 a Scottish explorer, Captain Robert Jacob Gordon, discovered the Orange River of South Africa, which has since played such a considerable part in the delimitation of South African states. Perhaps in proper sequence I should have mentioned that the first explorer of North Africa (Tunis and Algeria) who gave an account of his travels in the more modern style was William Lithgow, who at the commencement of the seventeenth century—about 1610—travelled through parts of Algeria and Tunis. During the eighteenth century adventurous Scots found their way to Morocco or Algeria, most often unwillingly, being captured by Moorish pirates, and making their first experiences of Northern Africa as captives. They generally secured their freedom through their hard work and skill, obtaining recognition in the eyes of some local potentate, or by the more prosaic way of being ransomed, or possibly released at the end of some treaty-making with a Dey, a Bey, or a Sultan. Apparently some of these Scottish adventurers returned to the ports of Morocco or Algeria in a trading, or even in a consular capacity, and several of them took part in the newly arisen Liverpool trade with West Africa in the eighteenth century, thereby finding their way to the Senegal, Gambia, Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast.

The greatest hero, however, of Scottish exploration in the eighteenth century was Mungo Park, to honour whose memory we are assembled here to-night. It is of him and the results of his work that I shall treat principally; but before I begin to describe his truly remarkable journeys, perhaps you will allow me to give some description of their main object—the solution of the Niger mystery.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, public curiosity as to the ultimate source of the Nile was for a time set at rest by the journeys of Bruce. Whether or not Bruce had been preceded by the Portuguese, no one a hundred odd years ago (except perhaps a French geographer, D'Anville) had any doubt that the main stream of the Nile was the Abyssinian river. What therefore now attracted scientific curiosity was the course and outlet of the Niger. The Greek writers on geography in

the centuries that preceded the Roman Empire collected from their intercourse with the people of the southern Mediterranean, especially the Carthaginians and Egyptians, vague rumours of a fertile, well-watered region beyond the Sahara Desert, faint indications not only of the origin and course of the Nile, but also of some other Nile, some other great river or lake in West Central Africa. The Romans, when they took possession of the North African states, made at least one expedition to the southern regions of Morocco, and a still more remarkable one under Julius Maternus through Tripoli southwards into Fezan, and apparently from Fezan to somewhere in the neighbourhood of Bilma, that is to say, within no very great distance of Lake Chad. The stories gathered up by them and transmitted to us in the writings of Plinius Secundus, who was born at Verona in A.D. 23, pay much attention to the geography of Morocco, though the southward extent of this country is no doubt much exaggerated and confounded in Pliny's mind with vague traditions which may have reached him of Carthaginian journeys along the north-west coast of Africa. Pliny mentions repeatedly a great river flowing to the southward of Morocco called the Gir or Nigir. Much of his information, no doubt, relates to the River Draa, which is the southern boundary of Morocco, and is a very important watercourse draining the southern part of the Atlas Mountains—a river, however, which probably never flows to the sea in one continuous stream more than once in every few years, for a few weeks. There is nothing about this river to suggest well-watered tropical regions, nor are there in it any hippopotami or crocodiles. But in his description of the great River Nigir, Pliny, though he places it very much where the River Draa is found at the present day, was evidently repeating stories of the Bambotus or Senegal of the real Niger. It is very nearly certain that the Senegal River had been revealed to the knowledge of the Caucasian race by Hanno or other Carthaginian maritime adventurers. A knowledge of it spread from Carthaginian sources to Greek writers, and the description given of the fauna and of the vegetation makes it certain that, some five hundred years before Christ, the Mediterranean world had a glimmering knowledge of the regions of Atlantic Africa beyond the Sahara Desert; they knew, that is to say, that beyond the limits of this arid region there were hot lands through which copious rivers flowed, lands of strange wild beasts and of savage, naked men. Such information as reached the Mediterranean by the commencement of the Christian era may have suggested to ancient Greeks or Romans the existence in West Africa of another mighty river similar in many of its characteristics to the Nile, perhaps even, in the minds of some geographers, the ultimate head-waters of the Nile, which by an extraordinary curve reached Ethiopia and then turned at right angles to the Mediterranean.

With the irruption of the Barbarians into the Roman Empire, all interest in geography died away so far as Western Europe was concerned, while the Byzantine Empire limited its curiosity to the regions of the East. It was the Arabs who were to take up the geographical work commenced by Herodotus and continued by Aristotle and Strabo, Pliny, and Ptolemy of Alexandria. The Arabs invaded North Africa in 640

A.D. They rapidly imparted their religion and language to the Berber tribes whom they so strongly resembled in physical characteristics and mode of life, even their languages having a very remote affinity. In the ninth century the Arabs seem to have penetrated into Negro Africa due west from the Nile, and across some old caravan routes from Tripoli to the northern bend of the Niger. In the tenth century they had already produced maps indicating an actual knowledge of the regions south of the Sahara Desert. By about the year 950 A.D. some of their pioneers had travelled along the Atlantic coast south of Morocco till they reached the mouth of the Senegal. They then wandered eastwards up the course of that river and across the water-parting to the Upper Niger, on which river they probably met other pioneers of Islam who had penetrated through the regions of Lake Chad to the northern bend of the Niger. By the beginning of the eleventh century Muhammadanism and Arab influence had completely dominated the valley of the Niger, from its entry into the Sahara Desert near Timbuktu almost to its source. Great Muhammadan kingdoms arose in the lands of the Mandingo round about the Upper Niger, and the mysterious Fula race between the Niger and the Senegal became converted to the faith of Muhammad. In fact, in the eleventh century a great proselytising movement led a tribe of Berbers, the Murabitin or Moravides, across the Sahara Desert to Morocco and Spain, once more reconquering for Islam the Spanish peninsula. This, I think, was one of the most extraordinary episodes in the history of Africa: that at the commencement of the Middle Ages a wild race of Tawareq nomads should start from the Niger and in a very few years overrun Morocco, Algeria, and nearly all Spain and Portugal, thus staving off for another four hundred years the collapse of Islam in Western Europe.

All these movements of Arabs and Arabised Berbers and Negroes implanted very firmly in civilised Morocco—for Morocco was then a country of high civilisation—the knowledge of the existence of a great river in West Africa beyond the Desert. This river was much confused with the Senegal. Some people thought that the Niger—as it came afterwards to be called—flowed from Lake Chad more or less due west till it entered the sea through the mouth of the Senegal. This was the impression made on the minds of those European adventurers who coasted along North-West Africa in the fourteenth century. Some of these bold Normans from Dieppe, Genoese or Majorcans, probably visited the Senegal. They brought back stories of a river of gold, which greatly excited the cupidity and interest of the Portuguese. Through their intercourse with Morocco, which they had partially conquered, the Portuguese heard from their Moorish captives these stories of the Great River beyond the Desert. Being at the same time industrious students of the Classics in the revival of learning which had followed the erection of Portugal into a Christian kingdom, the Portuguese identified the Great River beyond the Desert, the River of Gold, the river of crocodiles and sea-horses, with the "Nigir" of Pliny, and it was probably the Portuguese who first invented the modern name of the river which by a slight variation we call "Niger."

It seems possible, however, that the Portuguese were not the first amongst the Latin nations to reach Western Tropical Africa beyond the Sahara Desert. In the thirteenth century the Genoese navigators had rediscovered the Canary Islands, and in the fourteenth century Normans from Dieppe, Genoese and Catalans from Majorca, had sailed down past the limits of the Sahara to the Senegal River, and even onwards to the coast of modern Liberia (where the Norman French claimed to have established themselves for nearly a hundred years) as far as Elmina on the Gold Coast. The Genoese navigators even may have penetrated further, and perhaps may have returned in safety, but leaving no definite record of their achievement; for all Italian maps of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, sixty or seventy years at least before the Portuguese discoveries, gave a delineation of the African continent which on its west coast is strikingly like actuality. But from various causes to do with European history, these efforts emanating from the south coast of the British Channel and the north coast of the Mediterranean came to an end in the early part of the fifteenth century, or were fused with the now stirring tale of Portuguese adventure which began under the direct impulse of Prince Henry the Navigator. Genoese and Venetian captains took service with the crown of Portugal. In 1444 the Portuguese ships reached the mouth of the Senegal River. This was at the time identified with the River of Gold or the Western Nile of the Arabs or with the Nigir or Niger of Pliny. In 1456 the remarkable Venetian navigator, Ca' da Mosto, in the service of Portugal visited the Senegal and Gambia Rivers, and appears to have made a journey inland for some distance along the course of the Senegal. From intercourse with the Moors he brought back stories of the Niger River and Timbuktu, and above all of a wonderful city or country called Guiné or Ghinala. These stories seem to have had for origin the remarkable civilisation of Jene, a well-known town and district on the Upper Niger, constantly the headquarters of a powerful Muhammadan kingdom either under the Mandingos or the Fulas.

From this time onwards till the eighteenth century either the Senegal or the Gambia were looked upon as the outlet into the sea of a great river flowing from a lake in the heart of Africa (Lake Chad, in fact) to the Atlantic. The Moorish stories of a great watercourse running east and west [1] muddled European geography for several centuries. All round the Atlantic coast of Guinea may be observed one great estuary after another. Every few miles from the Senegal southward one encounters an important river mouth. It might well be supposed, therefore, that these multitudinous estuaries constituted perhaps the vast delta of a great river draining at least a third of tropical Africa. Besides the thirst for gold, which for a time was partially slaked by the discovery of the Gold Coast, European covetousness was attracted towards the basin of the Niger, a land which was felt vaguely to be analogous to the Moslem East. Portuguese explorers had penetrated inland from the

[1] The Senegal, Niger, Komalugu, Lake Chad and Bahr-el-Ghazal appeared evidently to the first Arab explorers to be one continuous waterway.

Gold Coast to the verge of the Niger watershed in that direction, at any rate to lands beyond the forest, under the influence of some semi-civilised Muhammadan peoples. The civilisation, in fact, of the Niger basin between the sources of that river and the falls of Bussa was very nearly on a par with the European civilisation of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There is very little doubt that the valley of the Upper Niger north of 10° N. lat. has for many centuries been lifted above mere savagery—above that savagery which was the almost unbroken quality of the Guinea coast belt from the Gambia to the Niger Delta, the Congo and the Cape of Good Hope, prior to the Portuguese settlement of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Some have even supposed that the influence of the Caucasian, which is everywhere, I believe (except in America), synonymous with the Neolithic Age and the raising of Man from a condition of barbarism, emanated from Ancient Egypt: that something of Egyptian civilisation, including the domestic animals of Egypt, found its way from the middle Nile across Kordofan and Darfur to the basin of Lake Chad and thence to the Upper Niger, while at a later date the Libyans of North Africa and the Sahara Desert, who are absolutely of Caucasian stock, found their way across the Sahara Desert with the aid of oxen and camels and permeated the healthy regions of the Upper Niger. Some, like myself, believe the Fulas to have been a Caucasian race of North Africa speaking a type of language antecedent to the Berber and Semitic tongues, and driven from North-West Africa into Negro-land by the advent of the Iberians, who brought with them from southern Europe a type of language from which the modern Hamitic and Semitic tongues are descended. At any rate the civilisation of the Niger seems to be older than the irruption of Islam and the Islamic Arabs and Moors into that region.

It was therefore towards something like a western India, a land of gold, and also a land of well-clothed, turbaned people riding on horses or donkeys, a land of well-built cities and much material comfort, that European adventure was so strongly attracted from the fifteenth century onwards. The British were not slow to be infected with this search for the Niger River and the far-famed city of Timbuktu. In the seventeenth century a British company was formed to explore the Gambia with the object of reaching the Niger. The first explorer sent out by this enterprise, Richard Thomson, eventually met with a disaster, being murdered at the instigation of the Portuguese, but he was succeeded by Richard Jobson, who ventured a considerable distance up the Gambia—about three hundred miles. He failed, however, to reach the Niger, and for nearly a hundred years enterprise in this direction on the part of the British was stopped. The French, however, had taken the matter up by way of the Senegal. Their explorations, however, showed conclusively that the Senegal and the Gambia also were rivers quite independent of the Niger system. This was confirmed by Captain Bartholomew Stibbs, who explored the Gambia on behalf of a British company in 1723.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, Lord Halifax, a British statesman, became much interested in African exploration, especially as

regards the source of the Nile. It was he who made the great Scottish traveller, Bruce—one of the first *scientific* explorers—Consul or Consul-General in Algeria, and then furnished him with the means to penetrate far into North-Eastern Africa. Bruce's preliminary work in Algeria, Tunis and Tripoli so whetted the curiosity of scientific men in England and Scotland as to the marvels of interior Africa that it led indirectly to the foundation of the African Association, which proved such a potent instrument in African discovery, and which was the direct parent of the Royal Geographical Society of London. The moving spirit of this association was Sir Joseph Banks, and it was Sir Joseph Banks who selected Mungo Park for the exploration of the Niger. The African Association had despatched a daring but too eccentric American seaman, Ledyard, to Egypt, with the idea that he should cross the African continent and come out on the Guinea coast, but he died soon after his arrival in Egypt. Another traveller despatched in 1789 was Horneman, an ancestor, I believe, of the founder of the famous tea firm. Horneman, we now know, made a most marvellous journey. He started from Tripoli in 1789, crossed the Sahara, and almost, if not quite, reached the Lower Niger. He seems to have died in the Nupe country, which is now the headquarters of British administration in Nigeria. Had Horneman not succumbed to dysentery or fever, he would certainly have attempted to follow the great river to its outlet in the sea, and might thus have forestalled by something like fifty years the ultimate discovery of Richard Lander. Major Houghton was sent by the Association to the Gambia. He reached the Upper Niger from this direction, the country of Bambuk, and the Upper Senegal, but was misled by Moorish tribes into entering the Desert, where he was finally killed or left to die.

All this time, though no European had yet returned to tell of actual vision of the Niger waters, there was no doubt whatever in the mind of educated Europe that Western Africa did possess a mighty water-course, rising somewhere behind the mountains of Senegambia and flowing eastwards. What became of the river then was a matter of much disputed conjecture. Some geographers held that it ended in Lake Chad, a great inland sea of Central Africa which had no outlet. Others believed that the Niger after flowing past Timbuktu took a southern bend (which was quite true) and flowing down through the Equatorial regions of Western Africa, entered the sea under the name of Congo. This was the theory favoured by Mungo Park, and one which was not completely disproved till the journey of Richard and John Lander in 1832 finally solved all doubt by proving the Niger to possess about fifteen outlets into the Bight of Benin.

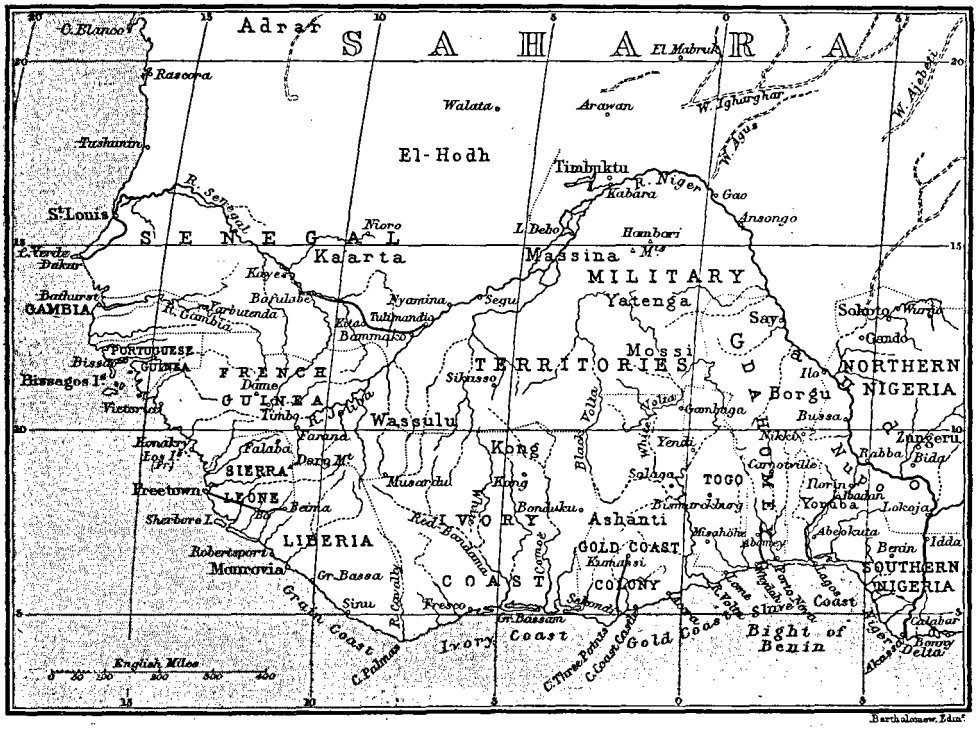
When Major Houghton had disappeared, the African Society looked about for another explorer to search for and relieve Houghton, and if necessary to continue his task. Their choice fell, through the influence of Sir Joseph Banks, on a young Scottish surgeon, Mungo Park, who was born at Foulshiels, four and a half miles from Selkirk, on the 10th of September 1771. He was, as you know, the seventh child of a family of thirteen; his father, Thomas Park, being a small farmer, who, after

the manner of his class and country, determined to give all his children the best possible education. Fortunately, perhaps, for the fulfilment of his desire, Fate or Providence thinned out the family of thirteen to eight. Mungo, in common with most of his brothers and sisters, was first educated at home by a teacher, and then transferred to the Selkirk Grammar School, to which he walked backwards and forwards most days in the week—a distance of nine miles. At fifteen years of age he became apprenticed to Dr. Thomas Anderson, a surgeon in Selkirk, whose descendants, I believe, are amongst Selkirk's citizens at the present day.

In 1789 Mungo Park entered the Edinburgh University to complete his medical studies, during which time he gave special attention to botany. This taste had a decisive effect on his career, for it brought him into close relations with a clever young gardener and botanical student, James Dickson, who married one of Park's sisters. Dickson came to know Sir Joseph Banks, who had himself given Dickson a botanical appointment in London. Through Sir Joseph Banks' influence Park was appointed surgeon to an East India Company's ship, and under these auspices Park accomplished a sufficiently noteworthy voyage to Sumatra and other parts of the East Indies, where he made collections of Natural History. On his return, when he was twenty-four years of age, through the influence of Sir Joseph Banks he was selected by the African Association alluded to already.

On the 21st of June 1795 he landed at the mouth of the Gambia, where he was obliged to remain until the beginning of October. On the 2nd of December in the same year he left the navigable regions of the Upper Gambia and directed his little caravan toward the Upper Senegal. Between the Faleme and the main Senegal River, however, he met with almost insuperable difficulties. His goods were plundered, his followers dispersed, and he was reduced almost to death by starvation till he was pitied and relieved by an old woman. At this juncture also there came on the scene the son of a great Mandingo chief of the Upper Senegal, who, thinking that his father might like to see a real white man, took Park along with him to his father, the King of Kason, whose country lay round about the modern French station of Kayés. From this point the Senegal is navigable almost all the year round to the sea. This, in fact, was the country of Bambuk which has always played an important part in West African history. From here he made his way to Kaarta, still in the land of Negroes, though a region bordering on the Sahara. Consciously or unconsciously, he was following the same route as Houghton. Although longing to proceed due east and strike the Niger, native wars and rumours of wars kept heading him off in the direction of the Sahara Desert and the land of the Moors. These Moors were distinctly different to the Tamasheq (Tawareq) of the more central parts of the Sahara, who founded Timbuktu in the eleventh century, and who ever since have been intermittent raiders of the northern bend of the Niger. The "Moors" who are to be met with along the north bank of the Senegal and in the western limits of the Sahara Desert are allied in origin to the Tawereq, but are a good deal more mixed with Negro

and Arab blood. Some of them speak the Zenaga dialect of that great group of Berber tongues which includes the language of the Tamasheq (Tawareq or Touareg) also. But a debased form of Arabic ("Hassanieh") more ordinarily prevails amongst them. The Sultan of Ludamar was the chief of a section of these Moorish tribes, and a man probably of mainly Arab descent. He enticed Park and his two remaining servants, Johnson and Demba, into his possession. Between February and June 1796 Mungo Park was treated like a mouse captured by a cat. The detestable Arab-Moorish hybrids, sometimes known as the Hassanieh tribe, submitted him to every indignity and considerable torture. Again



The Niger Basin.

and again they were within an inch of killing him. Sometimes he would be allowed a deceptive amount of personal liberty, so that he would escape and perhaps travel a hundred miles or so from their clutches, only however to be captured, brought back, and worse treated than ever. He was robbed little by little of his possessions. Once, he tells us, he was shut up in a hut with a wild hog, any species of pig appearing to these fanatical Muhammadans to be the vilest of animals, and consequently to have a natural affinity with Christians. Strange to say, however, the pig did not attack Park, but frequently charged and gored his tormentors. His faithful personal attendant, Demba, was sold into slavery, and never heard of any more. The other, an Anglicised Negro named Johnson,

worn out with constant terror and privations, lost all hope, and refused at the last moment to accompany Mungo Park on his second attempt at escape. Park during his captivity would have died several times from sheer starvation had he not been taken pity on by some of the Moorish women, especially by a certain Fatima, the wife of his principal tormentor, Ali. Fatima was a mountain of flesh, as are all the high-caste women in the harems of these Moors. She took a capricious liking to Park from his good looks, which were apparent even when he was emaciated with hunger and fatigue. Indeed, through all these adventures in Africa women befriended him, old and young alike. Generally at some crisis a woman provided him with food or shelter. Yet it is amusing to read that the Moors, women and men alike, reproached Park with being grossly indecent, because he wore the European clothes which were fashionable at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Though these persons were almost without an elementary idea of morality—were even, one might say, depraved—they considered that the human form should be as little revealed as possible, and shrouded in voluminous garments. It is perhaps somewhat extraordinary that Mungo Park, like several other African explorers of the same date, in the North as well as in the tropical regions, clung so tenaciously to European clothing, obviously unfitted as the fashions of that day were for African travel, besides the fact that they made the white man at once conspicuous; whereas clad in Arab or Moorish fashion he might have passed through these regions without undue notice or opposition.

When in the month of February 1796, Park left the Moorish camp before the dawn, jumped on to a horse, and galloped for freedom, he had embarked upon the most critical period of his life until that last struggle with the rapids of the Lower Niger which terminated his existence. He had to ride from the verge of the Sahara through the Negro country of Bambara. Much of the northern part of this country was waterless. Park was sometimes five days at a time without a drink of water, which he then only obtained from some chance rainfall. There was fortunately a certain amount of herbage which kept his horse alive, and he himself would assuage the agonies of thirst by chewing leaves. As often as not the storms which seemed to promise relief were only dust storms, and added to his agonies of thirst. Occasionally he would be unable to approach a well or a stream-bed because the way to the water-supply was obstructed or guarded by fierce lions. The journey was by no means devoid of human beings, but from none of these did he derive anything but harsh treatment. Much of the country had to be accomplished on foot, the horse being too weak to bear him. If his resistance to the agonies of thirst is wonderful, it strikes the reader of his experiences how more remarkable was that bodily strength which enabled him to exist, walking or riding, for a week or ten days at a time with practically no more food than could be derived from the chewing of leaves or roots, or an occasional handful of beans tossed to him by some half-contemptuous Negro.

But at last he got near to the Bambara capital of Segu, and to his great

relief his reception at the hands of the Negro king was a friendly one, though the king, influenced by Moorish visitors at his court, refused to see Park personally. It was when waiting to cross the Niger at Segu, "shunned and treated like a pariah," that he received unexpected hospitality and kindness from a negress, who, while he rested, sang with her companions that song which Park inscribed in his book, and which has been so often quoted :—

"The winds roared and the rains fell.
The poor white man sat under our tree.
He has no mother to bring him milk,
No wife to grind his corn.
Let us pity the white man;
No mother has he."

From Segu, Park travelled along the north bank of the Niger to Sansandig, where he was again harassed by the detestable Moors. His journey extended along the Niger banks for another eighty miles eastwards; but he stopped short before reaching Lake Debo owing to the utter destitution of his condition and the hostility of the Moorish merchants (whose denunciation of him dissuaded the Negroes and Fulas from showing him hospitality). His clothes were reduced to rags. He had absolutely no means with which to buy food, having parted even with the brass buttons of his coat in return for such hospitality as had been shown him. Amongst the tortures he endured at that time were mosquito bites. The whole valley of the Niger was swarming with mosquitoes, and every night was renewed misery. How under these conditions—alone, half-naked, and absolutely without means—he ever succeeded in returning to the coast, is one of the marvels of African exploration.

For some time past he had been without his faithful horse, which he had left behind in an emaciated condition at a place called Madibu. After returning on foot from his furthest exploration of the Niger, and again at the point of despair, having been very badly treated by a Negro guide, he raised his voice in expostulation in the streets of this town of Madibu, and to his surprise was answered by the loud neighing of a horse. At that moment the head man of the town came up to him and asked if he knew who was speaking to him. Park looked puzzled, and the man explained his jest by saying that the neighing came from Park's own horse which he had left behind, thinking it was dying, which had recovered, and now recognised its master's voice.

But his troubles were far from being over, though it was a great joy to regain possession of the faithful steed. The rains had burst in their fullest violence in the month of August. As he retraced his steps along the Niger banks the Moors renewed their persecution. He was driven from village to village, often without food or shelter, sometimes within an ace of being killed by lions, which in those days seem to have infested this country in extraordinary numbers. Whenever his life was saved by timely food or shelter, it was a Negro who showed this kindness. Moors, Arabs, and Fulas evinced an unwavering hostility towards the white man. Yet it is regrettable to note that Park apparently to the

end of his days could not bring himself to condemn the Slave Trade. The only thing which excited his compassion, in the horrors of which he was one of the principal witnesses, was the fate of the intelligent Muhammadans of the superior, almost Caucasian races—Arab or Fula hybrids—being sent into captivity. For the poor simple-minded black Negro, the one type of humanity that had made his exploration of the Niger possible, he had little to say.

On his return journey he traced the course of the Niger upwards as far as Bammako. Here, curiously enough, the Moors showed themselves very civil, and sent the traveller rice and milk. Leaving Bammako to travel through the Fula country of Manding, Park was set upon by Fula robbers, who stripped him naked, robbing him even of his hat. When he protested they were within an ace of shooting him, but as they rode away, one of the Fulas, more compassionate than the rest, threw back to him his hat, shirt, and trousers. Park was transported with delight, for in the lining of the hat were hidden the precious notes that he had made of his journey. Once again he was rescued by Negroes, and Negroes on his subsequent journey across the mountains towards the Gambia nursed him when he was ill with fever, and kept him as their guest for months till he regained his strength. At last he joined a Muhammadan slave caravan, and under its escort reached the navigable waters of the Gambia, where, of course, he found that he had long since been given up for dead. From the mouth of the Gambia his journey home was still one of ill-luck. He started in a slave ship bound for the United States. The ship was so unseaworthy that it had to put into the island of Antigua in the West Indies. Here, fortunately, he obtained a passage in a fast sailing vessel which landed him at Falmouth on the 22nd of December 1797. He had been absent from England two years and nine months.

Arrived in London, Park devoted himself to writing an account of his travels. He then returned to Foulshiels, and spent much of the year 1798 in the vicinity of Selkirk. In the summer of 1799 he married Miss Anderson, the daughter of his old master and teacher, Dr. Anderson. They had a happy married life (during which three children were born), until the close of 1803, when he was invited to visit the Colonial Office in London. Between 1799 and 1803 Park practised as a surgeon at Peebles, but was constantly visited with restless longings to add to his achievements as an explorer. The British Government now offered him the command of an expedition to explore the course of the Niger. He accepted the commission. Various delays occurred in its equipment, but at last, on the 31st of January 1806, he started from England, accompanied by Dr. Anderson and Mr. George Scott, both of them from Selkirk or the vicinity. He also took with him five boat-builders or carpenters. At the island of Goree, which is in the harbour of Dakar (now the capital of French West Africa, but then a British possession), Park picked up Lieutenant Martyn, thirty-five British soldiers, and two bluejackets. With this force, which rode donkeys that had been shipped from the Cape Verde Islands, he ascended the Gambia, and on the 27th of April 1805 set out from the upper navigable reaches of that river in the direction of the Niger. He reached Bammako on the Niger at the

end of August with only *seven* survivors out of the forty Europeans who had started with him from the Gambia. None of these Europeans were of any real aid to Park owing to their inexperience of African travel, their over-indulgence in alcohol, and the extent to which they suffered from fever; but he had with him a Mandingo head-man, Isaac or Izako, who was often of great assistance, and whose ultimate action in regard to Mungo Park probably rescued for us the only evidence we have of his second exploration of the Niger. Alexander Anderson, his brother-in-law, to whom he was devotedly attached, died on the 28th of October 1805, and Scott soon afterwards. Nevertheless, with Lieutenant Martyn and the remaining Europeans (Martyn unfortunately seems to have been a man of very different calibre and usefulness to either Scott or Anderson), Mungo Park left Sansandig on the Upper Niger at the end of November 1805 in a sailing vessel which he had rigged out in preparation for his journey of discovery down the Niger. His crew consisted of Martyn, three British soldiers (one of whom was mad, while the others were sick), Amadi Fatuma (a Mandingo guide), and three Negro slaves.

From the subsequent information collected by Izako from Amadi Fatuma, who was the sole survivor of the expedition, we gather that Park, after leaving Sansandig, journeyed almost uninterruptedly down the course of the Niger as far as Yauri, a place on the Niger some distance to the north of the Bussa rapids. Park's expedition had been attacked by natives near Lake Debo, and again in the vicinity of Timbuktu. At the Tosaye rapids fresh attacks took place on the part of the Tawareq, while the vessel was nearly lost on the rocks with which the river began to be strewn. But after leaving the Ansonga rapids the expedition had a long stretch of uninterrupted navigation, especially when they entered the Hausa country, and therefore Park dismissed his faithful interpreter, Amadi Fatuma, at Yauri, believing that he was now in close proximity to the Gulf of Guinea. Moreover, as from this point southwards he expected to travel through Negro lands, he felt assured of a friendly reception. Unfortunately, Lieutenant Martyn was the worst possible assistant under these circumstances. His one idea seems to have been to shoot at any native gathering of suspicious aspect or intentions. The hostilities increased concurrently with the frightful difficulty of navigating the Bussa rapids. At last the prow of the vessel stuck in the cleft of a rock, and in despair Park and his companions jumped into the water, where they were either drowned or killed by the weapons of the enraged Negroes. Only one boatman (a slave) survived this disaster.

We must not be too severe perhaps even on the memory of Martyn. It must be remembered that the appearance of the white man in the lands of the Niger was a serious portent to the intelligent Fula, to the Arabised Moor, and to the Tawareq of the desert. They already realised that in the Northern Caucasian they themselves saw a future master, one who was going to set their world to rights. Therefore wherever Park went with his expedition they received him with undisguised hostility. The rumour of war spreads easily in Africa, and no doubt long before Park himself arrived within their gates the Negroes of Bussa heard an exaggerated account of the slaughter which was being effected by the

white man's weapons. Nevertheless it was a cruel tragedy which robbed this gallant pioneer of the complete accomplishment of his task.

It was long before his family believed that Park was really dead, despite the fact that the British Government despatched Izako to collect positive evidence, and that Izako even succeeded in bringing back Park's sword-belt from the King of Yauri. As late as the year 1827, Thomas Park, the explorer's second son, seized an opportunity of landing on the Gold Coast, and started for the interior to search for his father. He died or was killed on the borders of Ashanti.

Not even when Izako returned with all the intelligence he could collect as to the fate of Park's expedition was it realised how near the great explorer had been to solving the whole secret of the Niger, that he had died in fact at a spot only some four hundred miles in a direct line from the Gulf of Guinea. The first calculations as to the extent of his exploration only carried the Niger eastwards about a hundred miles beyond Timbuktu. Nevertheless in 1808 a clever German geographer, Reichardt, had published a guess to the effect that the final outlet of the Niger was contained in that huge delta of rivers—in fact, what we now know as the Niger Delta, in the Bight of Benin. Very little notice was taken of this. Nor was there even much attention paid to the still more remarkable deductions of M'Queen. M'Queen was a Scotsman who resided for a time in the West Indies, and there came into contact with Mandingo slaves, one or two of whom had actually known Park on the Niger. For years he collated the accounts given to him by intelligent Negroes in the West Indies, and in 1816, and again in 1821, he published theories as to the course of the Niger and its outlet into the Bight of Benin which traced its course with astonishing accuracy. Nevertheless a considerable volume of scientific opinion held that the Niger could not cut its way through the continuous range of the Kong Mountains, which theorists had drawn all round the West African coast-belt. The theory that the Niger was lost in the wastes of the Sahara was too disappointing to be entertained. Consequently the *Congo* was considered its only possible outlet, and Captain Tuckey was sent out by the British Government to the mouth of the Congo to trace that river up till it ended in Mungo Park's Niger. His expedition was a complete disaster.

Then a new way of approaching the Niger regions was suggested, and Denham and Clapperton and Oudney were despatched by the British Government from Tripoli to cross the Sahara. This they did with extraordinary success. They discovered Lake Chad and the Shari River, and finally Clapperton reached the vicinity of the Niger at Sokoto. But the Fula sultan would not allow him to continue his journey to the great river. He therefore returned to England, and was again despatched to West Africa. Amongst his companions, all of whom soon died after leaving the Gulf of Benin, was Richard Lander, a Cornishman. Clapperton and Lander passed through Yoruba, and reached the Niger almost at the exact spot where Park had been killed. Clapperton then proceeded by a devious course to Sokoto, where he died of fever. His faithful companion, Lander, returned to England. Under discouraging

circumstances, and with very paltry encouragement from the British Government, Richard Lander with his brother John went out again to West Africa, landed at Badagry, a place near Lagos, and thence reached Yauri on the Niger. The brothers Lander navigated the river down stream till its junction with the Benue, and thence southwards into the fierce Pagan cannibal country of the Lower Niger and its delta. After overcoming tremendous difficulties, they issued from the main stream of the Niger through the Brass River to the breakers of the Atlantic Ocean. They had completed Mungo Park's exploration down to the sea.

There then only remained to trace the main stream of the Niger to its source. The sources of the Niger were perhaps actually discovered by two French explorers, Zweifel and Moustier, and by the English traveller, Winwood Rede, in the sixties of the nineteenth century.

The ultimate history of Niger exploration has been a division of glories between Britain and France, with some share also to be attributed to the eminent German, Flegel. The region drained by this great river is partly under French and partly under British administration. The great names—so far as Britain is concerned—in this work are also Scottish in descent, if not always in birthplace. Amongst them must be mentioned MacGregor Laird, who practically founded the British navigation of the Lower Niger, and that fleet of trading vessels now belonging to Messrs. Elder Dempster, with its shipbuilding yards at Glasgow; Joseph Thomson, who made the most important treaties that extended British influence over Northern Nigeria (and who has written an admirable *Life* of Mungo Park); and Sir George Taubman Goldie, whose family, I believe, originated not far from Selkirk, who was the political founder of the British dominions of vast extent which lie between the Niger, the Benue and Lake Chad. Perhaps also I may venture to attach my own name with due humility to the long list of "Nigerians," as also being one of Scottish descent, for to your lecturer of to-night fell the lot of organising the beginnings of the British Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, in that Delta of the river which Mungo Park very nearly succeeded in tracing to its outlet in the ocean: that river with which his name must remain for ever connected, like that of Speke with the Nile, Stanley with the Congo, and Livingstone with the Zambezi.

ON THE FRONTIER OF THE WESTERN SHIRÉ, BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA.

(With Map.)

By H. CRAWFORD ANGUS.

THOUGH the boundaries of the Western Shiré have been defined upon the map, and several of the more important rivers and mountains have been approximately denoted, yet very little seems to be even yet known